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**REMARKS BY**

**U.S. AMBASSADOR TO BANGLADESH DAN MOZENA  
CELEBRATING TWO YEARS AS U.S. AMBASSADOR TO BANGLADESH  
AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

**RUPOSHI BANGLA HOTEL  
NOVEMBER 19, 2013**

Aftab, Gafur, Special Guests of the Head Table ... and All my Good Friends of Amcham ...

Asalaam 'mlaikum ... and good afternoon.

Two years ago this very day I arrived in Dhaka as America's ambassador to wonderful Bangladesh ...

Some of you were there and heard it for yourself as I came off the airplane ...

Thunk, thunk, thunk ...

Some of you heard it last November when I stood here and spoke of my first year as ambassador in Bangladesh ...

Thunk, thunk, thunk ...

Many of you may have heard it just now ... as I walked over to this podium ...

Thunk, thunk, thunk ...

Everywhere I go, people always hear me coming ... thunk, thunk, thunk ...

I tell people to pay no attention to that irritating noise ... it's just me, dragging along the heavy mandate that was thrust upon me in November 2011, when I left Washington to begin my ambassadorship here.

That mandate, as some of you may recall, is to broaden, to deepen, to strengthen the partnership between America and Bangladesh, to the benefit of the people of both countries. And if you read the fine print on my mandate, you will discover, "the sky is the limit ... the sky is the limit ..." I am charged with taking America's relationship with Bangladesh as far as Bangladesh wants to go.

This mandate remains unchanged.

In fact, just yesterday my newly anointed boss Nisha Biswal was in town, and one of her key missions was to renew that mandate: "Dan," she said, "I want you and your team work as hard as you can to take America's partnership with Bangladesh to even greater heights."

My commitment to Nisha, my commitment to you, my commitment to the people of Bangladesh is that my Embassy team and I will not come up short ... we will do everything/everything that we can to promote a Bangladesh that is peaceful, secure, prosperous, healthy and democratic. We know that such a Bangladesh is good for America, good for South Asia, and, most particularly, we believe such a Bangladesh is good for the great people of Bangladesh.

As I look back over the past twenty-four months, I see the important progress that we and the people and government of Bangladesh have made in broadening, deepening, strengthening this partnership. Let me cite just a few examples that drive home the point that the partnership between America and Bangladesh has never/never been better than it is today, at this very moment as I stand before you:

- Working together, we have institutionalized the relationship. Last year Secretary Clinton and Foreign Minister Dipu Moni created the Partnership Dialogue. At the time, Secretary Clinton said the relationship is so important that its success should not be linked to the personal interests and priorities of the incumbent Secretary or Foreign Minister, but rather should have an institutional foundation of its own. In May, UnderSecretary Wendy Sherman and Foreign Secretary Shahidul Haque held the second meeting of the Partnership Dialogue and participated in our first ever Private Sector Forum ... and what a success ... I believe this legacy will long endure.
- We and our Bangladeshi counterparts have also institutionalized our security partnership. In April this year we held the second session of the Security Dialogue, and a week ago we had here in Dhaka the second session of the Bilateral Defense Talks. This deepening security partnership has yielded great dividends. Bangladesh can now better protect itself from the trafficking of people, drugs, and arms, from terrorism, from piracy, from theft of fish and other maritime assets. The Bangladesh Coast Guard and Navy now have the fastest boats in the Bay of Bengal, reducing robberies by over two-thirds and cutting insurance rates by a third. Bangladesh's version of the Navy Seals helps protect Bangladesh's vital maritime assets. In a month the Somudra Joy will steam into Chittagong. This ship, a gift from America, is the largest ship in the Bangladesh Navy, and I am working now to get another such ship so Bangladesh will have two of these 378 foot vessels to command its waters. We also partner with the Bangladesh Army in honing its Special Operations forces so they can better secure the land borders. And soon I hope to launch a partnership with the Border Guard of Bangladesh to respond to their request for specialized training.

- The partnership is yielding great dividends in better preparing the nation for natural disaster. I am so proud that America right now is partnering with the Government of Bangladesh to build 130 more cyclone shelters, adding to the over 550 that we together have already built or rebuilt. I am hopeful that next year we will be able to provide four more C-130's to augment the Government's capacity to respond to disasters. And we are supporting the Government's determined efforts to help prepare for an earthquake disaster.
- Bangladesh is the global model/the global model for slashing child under five mortality and maternal mortality, and in enabling Bangladeshi families to have the family size they want. Few, if any, other developing countries can match Bangladesh's historic successes, and I am proud that America is a key partner in helping Bangladesh on these fronts.
- At the time of Bangladesh's liberation, some famous people dubbed Bangladesh a bottomless basketcase. In reality, Bangladesh is becoming an overflowing basket of agricultural bounty as the nation has already become rice self-sufficient and is well on its way to becoming food self-sufficient. President Obama's signature Feed the Future program has contributed to helping Bangladesh increase agricultural production, improve families' ability to procure food, and help mothers prepare more nutritious food for their families.
- Trade and investment between the two countries continues to grow, up ten percent this year.
- The number of Bangladeshis studying in the U.S. has shot up over 15% this year, further deepening the people-to-people ties that are key to the partnership between our two countries and bringing us a step closer to our goal of increasing the number of Bangladeshi students in the U.S. by ten-fold.
- The newest frontier of partnership is working together with Bangladesh's many other partners to help bring the RMG sector to international standards in term of fire safety, factory structural soundness, and respect for workers' rights to freely associate and organize. Bangladesh has begun already to create the processes that will bring the apparel sector to global standards, paving the way for Bangladesh to become the number one RMG exporter in the world!

I could go on and on ... helping the police build a community-based force, mitigating for the impact of global climate change, inspiring pre-school children to learn through the magic of Sisimpur, expanding Bangladesh's training center for international peacekeepers ... the successes of the America-Bangladesh partnership seem almost endless. But you get the point ... America and Bangladesh are great partners, and our partnership is getting deeper, broader and stronger every day, which I think works greatly to the benefit of the people of both nations.

My love and passion for this country are no secret. I think everyone in this room is aware of my vision of Bangladesh as the next Asian tiger – the Royal Bengal Tiger -- strutting proudly across the global economic stage as Bangladesh plays a role commensurate with its being the world's seventh largest country. I think everyone in this room is aware of my aspiration of Bangladesh as a Middle-Income Country, where all have the means to provide their families secure housing, ample, nutritious food, good healthcare, and quality education.

I think the people, business, civil society, government of Bangladesh working together with America and all of Bangladesh's many other friends and partners can make the vision of Sonar Bangla reality. Of course, this will not be easy as the challenges of infrastructure, governance, and political instability are all real, but I believe they can be overcome/they must be overcome/they will be overcome as Bangladesh builds Sonar Bangla.

I believe the wonderful people of this great nation deserve nothing less.

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*Prepared for delivery*